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SUBJECT: RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR TO EU ON GEORGIA, ENERGY
SECURITY, FINANCIAL CRISIS

Classified By: USEU Polmincouns Chris Davis, for reasons 1.5 (d) and (e)
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SUMMARY

1.(C) On October 24, during an introductory meeting, Ambassador Silverberg and Vladimir Chizov, Russian Ambassador to the EU, discussed Georgia, the international financial crisis, energy issues, piracy, and EU-Russia relations, including preparations for their November summit in Nice. Chizov was courteous, but peppered his avuncular-style presentation with digs at the United States, Georgia, and the EU. The Ambassador pressed for humanitarian and monitors access to occupied parts of Georgia. She also probed Russian thinking on French proposals for the G-20 summit, and on the Commission's "third package" of energy unbundling proposals.
END SUMMARY

GEORGIA

2.(C) Chizov reiterated Russian complaints that Georgian forces had not moved back to pre- August 7 positions and that Georgian special forces "spetznaz" were making forays into the buffer zone being monitored by the EUMM. Russia expected the EU "who had volunteered for this task" to pay more attention; Lavrov had "no choice" but to go public. Chizov was careful to praise the French Presidency for its "good office" role to promote the cease-fire including, he claimed, "to ultimately take responsibility for the security" of the zones adjacent to SO and ABK.

3.(C) Chizov alleged that some EU capitals were not/not sending "the right signals" to Georgia and "must prevent revanchism" from Georgia. He warned that assistance from "the outside world" to Georgia must not feed its expectations that it can launch a revanchist attack on SO/AB. Given Chizov's expression of Russian confidence in the EU's good will, Amb. Silverberg questioned Russia's refusal to agree to allow access by impartial third party observers (including the EUMM and OSCE) throughout all of Georgia including SO/AB, in order to investigate claims of cease-fire violations and atrocities. Chizov tried to deflect the point by accusing the EU of handling the access requests incorrectly by failing to address them to the "governments of those independent countries" and by asserting that the Medvedev-Sarkozy cease-fire implementation plan only "spoke to deployment in zones adjacent to SO/AB." He further asserted that the separatist forces "were not doing anything beyond their own borders." Amb. Silverberg pressed the point further noting that if there were no independent monitors on the ground, there was no way to determine the facts of the situation. She expressed USG intentions to pursue the matter further. Turning to the humanitarian situation, Silverberg said there was no excuse to deny access to humanitarian organizations either. Chizov denied this, claiming that they could transit through North Ossetia as the ICRC and ECHO had done.

NICE SUMMIT

4.(C) Asked whether Russia expected access and assistance

issues to come up at the EU-Russia summit in Nice on November 14, Chizov opined that the discussion should be "more strategic and focused on global issues such as the financial crisis" than on "local issues," especially since the summit would take place on the eve of the G-20 summit in Washington.

Russia hoped to continue the discussion of economic issues that began at the June summit in Khanty Mansiisk as well as discuss European security architecture in which he claimed the EU was "very interested."

FINANCIAL CRISIS

5.(C) Silverberg reviewed initial U.S. thoughts on French proposals on the financial crisis, highlighting the need for a balance between actions to address long and short-term problems. The French idea of using their sovereign wealth fund to create an obstacle to foreign investment could be seen as protectionist. Chizov said he heard that French ideas were not yet crystallized on IFI involvement. He thought the French would have more to say on their proposals at the EU-Russia Ministerial in St. Petersburg on October 28.

SOMALIA AND PIRACY

6.(C) In response to Amb. Silverberg's question, Chizov confirmed that one Russian naval ship (NFI) had arrived in the Gulf of Aden yesterday and that Russia was now finalizing and agreement with the Government of Somalia "such as it is" for cooperative status on piracy. Attempting to draw a response from the Ambassador, he said he heard that NATO was considering a presence in the Gulf and that this could set up

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a situation of "competition" with the ESDP mission being prepared. He thought the Malaysians were there as well. Finally, he highlighted his understanding of the EU's "legal problems" with handling captured pirates, joking that "they don't have a Guantanamo like you do." He expressed pessimism that littoral states in the region would be willing to accept and prosecute nationals captured by third country patrols.

ENERGY SECURITY

7.(C) Asked for his view on the EU's third package of energy unbundling proposals, Chizov suggested that the document was "evolving," had been "watered down" and was perhaps "more pragmatic." He took pains to paint a scenario of differences among member states on the text as well as between European business and bureaucratic institutions. He claimed Russia would not "overdramatize" its concerns, but that it was annoyed by the disparity between Piebalg's private assurances that it was a non-discriminatory move and Barros's public roll-out, in which he referred to the so-called "Gazprom clause." Pressed for views, Chizov admitted that Russia was pinning its hopes on safety clauses in the proposal which he believed would protect existing investments or those negotiated under a multilateral or bilateral framework.

8.(C) Treating the Ambassador to a lengthy discourse on the European energy market and "investors' needs," Chizov repeated the Russian slogan around Brussels that South Stream had the gas, Nabucco did not, and the United States had to have Iranian gas to make the latter work. He "advised" the U.S. to make up its mind about Iran. Silverberg rejoined that it was actually Iran's decision (whether to re-join the international community) and not ours. More broadly, Amb. Silverberg pressed the importance of opening Russia's energy sector to upstream investment. In response to Chizov's claim that Europe had had no problem building pipelines with Russia during the height of the Cold War, she noted that Europe had been too complacent about collectively protecting its interest in energy security.

SILVERBERG

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